

3.1 Engineer Expressway and Firing Points 7, 8 and 9 Upgrades

USAG-AK has proposed to upgrade Engineer Expressway, a dirt/gravel road that runs through training areas in the northern portion of Fort Richardson. Additionally, Firing Points 7, 8 and 9, along Engineer Expressway, are also proposed for upgrades (Figure 34). The purpose of upgrades along Engineer Expressway is to improve the existing road and to re-establish hardened road surfaces and drainage features, including crowns, slopes, ditches, water bars and culverts. This will include grading, ditching, installing geotextile and placing fill material. All work will be carried out within 15 meters of the road centerline. Upgrade work at the three firing points will consist of additional clearing and hardening. All three firing points are accessed from Engineer Expressway and have been previously cleared. These projects are located on map quadrangles ANC B8, T15N, R3W, Sections 20, 21, 29, 32 and map quadrangle ANC B7, T15N, R2W, Sections 14, 15, 22 and 23.

Survey and Inventory

In July 2005 USAG-AK cultural resources staff reviewed the proposed project and the existing literature on cultural resources within the Fort Richardson cantonment area. In June 2005 a portion of the project area was pedestrian surveyed by a crew of 4-5 archaeologists employed by the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML, Colorado State University). Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, was the supervising archaeologist for this project. Survey work within the project area was also undertaken in the summers of 2002 and 2003 by CEMML archaeologists (supervised by William Hedman and Kirsten Andersen, respectively).

Parallel pedestrian transects spaced at 20 meters or less were walked in all areas that were not deemed too wet or too steep ($>40^\circ$) to contain cultural material. Systematic sub-surface testing was undertaken in areas determined to be high probability (e.g., lake margins, ridges, benches adjacent to steeper slopes) during initial review of the proposed project area, and as determined by the supervising archaeologist and field crew leader based on survey findings. In addition to pedestrian transects, 40cm x 40cm shovel tests were excavated in the project area. None of the shovel tests excavated throughout the project area contained any cultural material.

The entire length of Engineer Expressway has been archaeologically surveyed for at least 100 meters on both sides and, for most of its length, for a kilometer on both sides. The area adjacent to the road (for at least 100 meters) around Firing Points 7, 8 and 9 has also been archaeologically surveyed. These three firing points have been previously cleared and disturbed and proposed upgrades will involve re-clearing and earthwork within the firing point boundaries.

Cultural Resources

There are no known cultural resources located in the vicinity of the proposed projects.

Results

After a review of the proposed projects USAG-AK has determined that there are no historic properties located within the project areas. All other previously recorded archaeological sites or historic properties at Fort Richardson fall outside of the proposed project areas. USAG-AK has determined that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed projects.



Figure 34. Engineer Expressway and Firing Points 7, 8 and 9